



Quick Reads

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Bi-partisan resolution to be introduced in caucuses tomorrow

As many readers head to the caucuses tomorrow, I would like to thank Governor Culver for recognizing the work of the [Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease](#) (PFCD) and the [Partnership for Better Health](#) (PBH). These organizations are making political history in Iowa by working for the introduction of a [resolution](#) in every caucus in the state, both Democratic and Republican. Through this resolution, PFCD and PBH hope to propel the objective of chronic disease prevention into the spotlight and onto the state platforms of Iowa's Democratic and Republican parties. In addition to voicing his support for this resolution, Governor Culver has also declared Jan. 3, 2008 Chronic Disease Awareness and Action Day.

To view the bi-partisan resolution being introduced around the state, please visit www.pfcdiowa.org/pfcd_caucus_resolution.pdf. To find out more about the Iowa caucuses, visit www.iowacaucus.org.

Free patches and gum available through Quitline

On January 1, Quitline Iowa (1-800-QUIT-NOW) began offering free nicotine patches and gum to help smokers and spit tobacco users overcome their addiction to nicotine. As one of the most effective methods of helping people quit, nicotine replacement therapy stands to save many, many lives in Iowa and greatly reduce the burden of health care costs to our state.

Paid for by the \$1.00 tax increase on cigarettes enacted last year, two-week's worth of free nicotine patches or gum are available to any Iowan age 18 or older who calls

Quitline Iowa. This benefit is available once per year by calling 1-800-784-8669 (1-800-QUIT-NOW).

Health care providers, including local public health clinicians, should also be aware of the Quitline fax referral service. Now available through a new number, 800-261-6259, the fax referral service allows providers to send in a [form](#) signed by the patient that allows Quitline Iowa counselors to take the first step in beginning a quit plan by calling the patient. Research indicates that physician referral of patients to smoking cessation programs is associated with a significantly higher participation rate than simply telling patients they should stop smoking. To access the form, please visit www.idph.state.ia.us/tobacco and look under "Quitline Iowa," or call 515-281-6225.

BRFSS report shows some progress made toward 2010 goals

The recently released [Iowa Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#) (BRFSS) report shows Iowans making gains in some areas of health, but losing ground in others. The good news is that we have surpassed the *Healthy Iowans 2010* goal of prohibiting smoking anywhere in the home. Nearly 75 percent of the BRFSS respondents said they have such rules. Another area of good news is problem gambling. Based on responses, the percent of Iowans who have experienced problems is below the goals set in the state health plan. Cancer screening statistics also show some promising improvements. For example, the percent of Iowa women over age 40 who have had a mammogram has increased, but is short of the *Healthy Iowans 2010* goal of 85 percent.

Although there has been a decline in the proportion of Iowans who are overweight, the BRFSS figures show that we have not been successful in preventing a further rise in the percent of Iowans who are obese—a *Healthy Iowans 2010* goal. Slightly more than one in four adult Iowans are obese. Diabetes is also on the rise in Iowa. The BRFSS says in 2006, 7.3 percent of respondents were diagnosed with diabetes, up from 6.8 percent in 2005. This is the highest percentage ever reported in Iowa. To view the 2006 BRFSS report, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/brfss.

Tobacco-free hospitals on the rise

Several Iowa hospitals celebrated a healthier holiday season last year, thanks to recently enacted tobacco-free campus policies. A new survey by the [Iowa Hospital Association](#) shows 94 Iowa hospital campuses are now tobacco-free. Taking advantage of the 2007 Great American Smokeout, seven Iowa hospitals kicked off their new policies in November. On New Year's Day, four more hospitals went tobacco-free.

Congratulations to these hospitals for creating a more healthy environment. You are a model for other organizations to make the switch to tobacco-free campuses to protect the health of their clientele, employees, and the public.

Iowa State Poison Control Center annual report now available

The 2005-2006 [Iowa State Poison Control Center](http://www.iowapoison.org) (ISPCC) annual report is now available. Twenty-thousand Iowans were managed, resulting in a net savings to Iowa's health care system of over \$5 million! A study conducted in 2006, showed that every \$1 invested in the ISPCC saved nearly \$9 in medical expenses. The health benefits of the ISPCC include averting the use of outdated or harmful home remedies for poisonings. The ISPCC is able to decrease injury, illness, and death due to poisoning by assessing patients early, initiating decontamination, and identifying patients who need more aggressive management. For more information, visit www.iowapoison.org.

We want your best practices

IDPH is committed to telling the citizens of Iowa about the good things public health is doing to make a difference. To do this, we want to highlight your best practices/success stories. Please send your ideas to Don McCormick at dmccormi@idph.state.ia.us.

To everyone in public health and all our partners—keep up the great work!
Tom